

voice to victims of domestic abuse and other crimes that sadly occur on a national scale.

The Violence Against Women Act, VAWA, a piece of legislation working to improve responses to domestic violence, is one of the major initiatives the caucus works on to protect, reauthorize, and expand the needs for this sad occurrence around our country.

In my district, we have several organizations, including the Central California Legal Services, Choice Women Empowerment, Centro La Familia, and Valley Crisis Center, in addition to the Marjaree Mason Center working non-stop to provide safety and support of domestic violence survivors.

I would like to thank Marjaree Mason's family for the continuous support and commitment to expanding the mission of its center over the past 40 years. Former Sheriff Steve Magarian and so many others continue to contribute to this important work that this center does, for domestic violence is still sadly prevalent in every community, affecting more than 10 million people each year in the United States.

We must continue to fight to ensure that no one in our valley and in our Nation suffers the same fate that Marjaree Mason faced. We must continue to work together to end domestic violence once and for all.

#### HONORING THE LIFE OF DAMON P. NELSON

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HOLDING) for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life and legacy of my friend, Damon Nelson, who passed away only a few days ago. Damon was a gifted individual who dedicated his life to serving his country.

A short time after graduating from college, Damon enlisted into the United States Air Force as an in-flight refueling specialist. Damon distinguished himself in the Persian Gulf War for which he was awarded an Air Medal and three Air Achievement Medals.

Yet Damon's service to his country did not end when he left the Air Force. For the past 15 years, Damon has worked as a senior level congressional aide here in Congress, first in Congressman NUNES' office and most recently as staff director of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence.

Mr. Speaker, we are all shaken and heartbroken by the news of Damon's untimely passing. He was loved by all who knew him for his good humor, his cheerful optimism, and his friendly personality. You could always count on Damon to lend a hand or provide some much-needed guidance.

At work he earned a reputation as a highly intelligent and enthusiastic doer capable of attacking any challenge that came through the door.

Damon Nelson will be remembered as a loving husband and a gifted individual who dedicated his life to public service and as a good friend.

My prayers are with his wife, Dana; his family; his colleagues; and his many, many friends.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. WENSTRUP).

Mr. WENSTRUP. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, it is with both sadness and pride that I rise to honor Damon Nelson. America lost a great patriot at too young of an age. Damon dedicated nearly his entire life to public service and always put service above self. He understood that freedom comes at a high price, and he dedicated his life to defending freedom for the next generation.

He believed that our country is worth sacrificing for and that freedom is worth fighting for. As Mr. HOLDING said, he served in the U.S. Air Force as an in-flight refueling specialist and was a veteran of the Persian Gulf War where he earned the Air Medal and three Air Achievement Medals.

Damon began his service on Capitol Hill working for his home district, the 22nd District of California. I know Damon for his exemplary service as the staff director for the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. Damon helped guide our committee and indeed our country through a tumultuous time with an unfailing commitment to seeking the truth and doing the right thing.

His calm leadership approach is an example to all of us. At moments where it seems like things may be falling apart, Damon was there with a joke and a laugh to hold the group together. He often used sarcasm with us when we needed it most, and he was a statesman when we needed it most. His kind and patient demeanor earned Damon the respect of everyone he knew. In a political climate that is often difficult, he kept sight on the fact that we are all Americans.

Indeed, all of us who knew Damon will sorely miss his strategic mind, warm personality, and genuine concern for others. My heart is with Damon's wife, Dana, and his family. I pray God's healing grace will be with them during this difficult time.

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HURD).

Mr. HURD. Mr. Speaker, it is with great sadness that we say goodbye to Damon Nelson, an Air Force veteran, a tireless public servant, and a friend to so many.

I was fortunate enough to know Damon through my role on the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence where he protected some of the Nation's most classified information and navigated complicated national security issues with absolute confidentiality and professionalism during a highly polarizing and rocky time. Damon provided a steady hand when our country needed it most.

I want his wife, Dana, to know that her family is bigger than she may realize, and we all love her so very much.

Ernest Hemingway said: "Every man's life ends the same way. It is only the details of how he lived and how he died that distinguish one man from another."

Damon did much to distinguish himself in this life, and he is finally home. We will miss him.

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from the great State of Arkansas (Mr. CRAWFORD), who is my colleague and friend.

Mr. CRAWFORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to join my colleagues in celebrating the life of Damon Nelson.

While I have only served on the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence for a short time, I grew to know, respect, and cherish Damon as a professional and as a friend. Our work on the committee is some of the most challenging and rewarding I have done since being elected to this body and is supported almost entirely by a loyal staff whose dedication to the American people is second to none.

As staff director, Damon set the tone and direction of committee staff who work closely with us as members and others in the House. He always greeted us with a smile and positive attitude. His leadership ensured we were fully equipped and prepared for every caucus meeting, hearing, or legislative issue. His staff saw him as a leader who wanted us to have the best, most accurate information and preparation for our work. They followed him with trust and appreciation for his approach to his work.

As you have heard, he served in the Air Force and deployed to the Persian Gulf War where he earned numerous medals. Over the following years, he moved on to serve in the Capitol here. Over the next many years, Damon moved up and eventually took the helm of the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence at a tumultuous time for this Chamber and for our country. His poise, his character, his attitude, and his care for our country shined through in recent years as this committee worked on some extremely sensitive and public matters. Not once did Damon put his own interests above anyone else's. He simply sought to serve his country through his role on this committee and in this body.

Mr. Speaker, I wish him and his family the best.

#### NAFTA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, Ohio's jobs and trade message to our Nation is as loud and clear as it always has been: trade must be about people, not just goods.

The job and wage destruction due to the original NAFTA continues to reverberate across our State and the

heartland. It undermines the economic security of hundreds of thousands of workers within our State and millions more across our Nation. Following the original NAFTA's implementation, town after town was emptied out of good jobs with good wages and benefits as jobs were outsourced south of our border.

America has borne witness to NAFTA's vast job outsourcing and wage drag. Millions have suffered firsthand as dire predictions actualized and the grandiose promises of job creation failed to materialize. Our Nation has lost thousands of jobs to penny-wage environments where workers cannot even afford to buy the goods they make. They toil in sweatshops and maquiladoras, exposed to unimaginable toxins and unsafe working conditions. The original NAFTA fueled massive peasant migration from Mexico's countryside to our Nation as thousands of subsidized farmers in Mexico had livelihoods extinguished. Mexico's white corn industry disappeared. It was decimated.

What a humanitarian tragedy is NAFTA. If anyone cares about people, not just goods, listen to my words: America must wake up to the impact our trade deals impose on people when negotiating with unequal economies.

Just look to the devastation levied when multinational corporate interests dominate negotiations. Transnational banks and multinational corporations put a heavy thumb on the scales of economic justice for the poorest and for workers in our country as well as Third World economies. They exploit powerless people. Trade with our closest neighbors is never simply a zero-sum game.

In the nearly three decades since NAFTA's original passage, our Nation has not even had 1 year of balanced trade accounts with Mexico and Canada. It has always been in the red.

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Indeed, the NAFTA deal has managed to add over \$1 trillion to America's trade deficits—red ink—and millions and millions of outsourced U.S. jobs.

Mr. Speaker, NAFTA renegotiation is too important an opportunity to hang on faulty assumptions. America fell for that back in 1993. We cannot let it happen again.

The devil is in the details. Incremental progress to uplift North American workers devastated by the original agreement will not be enough.

With the release of text, which remains unfinished and unresolved, comes the task to determine whether the job outsourcing bonanza that has taken hold since NAFTA's passage in 1994 has truly been addressed.

Let me ask:

Have strong, enforceable labor standards been included, subject to swift and certain enforcement?

Will transnational corporate interests retain the means to outsource American jobs to take advantage of rock-bottom wages in Mexico?

Will we protect the rights of Americans to know what is in the imported food they are feeding their families, or will trade facilitation hold priority over food safety for people?

Will Americans have access to affordable prescription drugs, or will the new NAFTA further rig the system to delay access to more affordable, safe generic drugs and biosimilars?

Let me ask people who visit Ohio to witness vivid evidence of a trade agreement that failed America's workers and communities as plant after plant shuts down. Beyond just the NAFTA trade deficit, all our global trade deficits have ballooned under this administration's erratic trade agenda.

In this wake, a modern NAFTA agreement to correct these injustices is long overdue. I have eagerly anticipated the release of specific text and a strategic agenda from this administration on how President Trump plans to bring living wage jobs back to America. Anything short of specifics that will clearly improve job prospects for Americans will fall short of the President's promises.

Congress must not rush any deal of such magnitude by only letting the executive branch negotiate. Democrats have called on this administration to work with Congress to reach necessary and substantive achievements beneficial for all Americans. No more fast track. No more.

Any new North American trade agreement must raise wages. It must create jobs in America and create a level playing field across the board.

Mr. Speaker, after a quarter century of job hemorrhaging and the upending of American workers and livelihoods, NAFTA must result in rising standards of living and new jobs that create real wages and benefits here in our country.

#### HONORING THE LIFE OF DAMON P. NELSON

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise also this morning to honor the life and legacy of my friend, Damon Nelson.

A lot of wonderful, lofty things have been said about him this morning in this Chamber. Every single one of those was true. I certainly identify with each and every one of those remarks. I will not repeat those but will walk a different path.

I did not realize the extent to which Damon impacted staffing across the Hill. Once he passed, I began to get information about folks whose lives had been touched and whose careers here in Washington had been started as a result of being hired and mentored by Damon over the years. There are people on my personal staff whom I did not realize had a direct connection to Damon because he had started their careers here in Congress and on the Hill through his mentorship and help.

I got to know Damon extremely well as a result of working on the House

Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence and his role as staff director, particularly when I took over running the Russia investigation. Damon was my direct contact with the staff. He did a masterful job at trying to expeditiously conduct that investigation, making sure that we dotted the i's and crossed the t's, making some really difficult decisions as we walked that path.

In addition to that, Damon handled the rest of the business of the Intelligence Committee, that important business that continues to go on in addition to the Russian investigation, doing a masterful job of shepherding all of that responsibility. He did it with class. He did it with a calmness and a self-assuredness that made it work.

Damon's humor and, yes, sarcasm, which has been mentioned often today, was a signature of his, but he used it well and in an appropriate manner. It was never in a hurtful or harmful manner, but to keep up the atmosphere.

Mr. Speaker, Damon's memory will live on in all our lives. Those of us who knew him will not forget him. He was that kind of an individual.

Obviously, my heart and prayers go out to his wife, Dana, and his family. He adored, loved, and worshipped his wife. She is in a hurting place today, as is his family.

All of us who knew him as a friend will miss him. Mr. Speaker, I miss my friend.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Utah (Mr. STEWART).

Mr. STEWART. Mr. Speaker, I also rise to honor my good friend, Damon. He was a dear friend, trusted colleague, loving husband, and a warrior who loved and served his country. We will miss him.

Very briefly, I would like to make the observation that the staffs that we work with here on the Hill are some of the finest men and women in the country, and the staff that we work with on the Intelligence Committee is the finest of them all. Damon was their leader. He was looked to for his leadership, for his compassion, for his humanity, and for his example of what it meant to be a warrior.

I also have to mention his family, as we honor them as well. Some of you know that I wear my father's Air Force wings. My brothers have served in the Air Force. I served in the Air Force. So did Damon's family.

Yesterday, I had the honor of meeting his father and mother, both retired Air Force who have served valiantly and served proudly, also his brother. I have to mention his wife, an Air Force colonel, who is a leader, a rock.

Having met her, I can tell you that I would follow her into battle. She is a great example of the finest young men and women that our Nation has to offer. This family has proven that they love their country by serving their country. We honor them in this small way today in the words that we say.

Damon, God bless you. To Damon's family, God bless you. Thank you for